

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Original) An instrument mount apparatus for positioning a surgical instrument comprising a mount body having a base portion moveably coupled at a first articulating joint and a side portion moveably coupled at a second articulating joint, and an actuator operatively connected to said first and second articulating joints, said first and second articulating joints being freely moveable when said actuator is in an unlocked position, wherein said first and second articulating joints are compressed each into a substantially immovable condition when said actuator is placed in a locked position, and wherein said first articulating joint is at an angle relative to said second articulating joint.

2. (Original) The instrument mount apparatus of claim 1 wherein said angle is less than about 120 degrees.

Claims 3 - 4. (Canceled) Please cancel claims 3-4 without prejudice to the possibility of filing one or more continuing applications directed to the subject matter recited therein.

5. (Original) The instrument mount apparatus of claim 1, wherein said actuator comprises a base post assembled thorough said base portion and said mount body and interconnected at a first end to a cam operatively interfacing a contact surface on said mount body, and a tie pin having a slotted portion which receives said base post, wherein, upon operation of said cam, said base post is drawn toward said cam and said locked position and a ramped portion of said base post drives said tie pin towards said locked position.

6. (Original) The instrument mount apparatus of claim 5, wherein said first articulating joint comprises a ball and socket joint and said base post further comprises a flange at a second end opposite said first end, wherein movement of said cam to said locked position draws said flange against said base portion thereby locking said ball and socket joint.

7. (Original) The instrument mount apparatus of claim 5, wherein said second articulating joint comprises a rotational joint including a frustoconical member extending from said side portion and a cooperating frustoconical cavity within said mount body.

8. (Original) The instrument mount apparatus of claim 7, further including a grip member, said side portion and said grip member positioned to form an opening therebetween for receiving a surgical instrument.

9. (Original) The instrument mount apparatus of claim 8, wherein said tie pin is connected, at a first end, to said grip member.

10. (Original) The instrument mount apparatus of claim 9, wherein said tie pin comprises a pair of flexible prongs which interconnect at said first end with said grip member.

Claim 11. (Canceled) Please cancel claim 11 without prejudice to the possibility of filing one or more continuing applications directed to the subject matter recited therein.

12. (Original) The instrument mount apparatus of claim 9, wherein said tie pin is releasably connected to a release button at a second end of said tie pin, wherein pressing of said release button extends said tie pin and grip member to allow removal of said grip member to exchange surgical instruments.

13. (Original) The instrument mount apparatus of claim 1, wherein said first articulating joint comprises a ball and socket joint.

Claim 14. (Canceled) Please cancel claim 14 without prejudice to the possibility of filing one or more continuing applications directed to the subject matter recited therein.

15. (Original) The instrument mount apparatus of claim 1, wherein said second articulating joint comprises a ball and socket joint.

16. (Original) The instrument mount apparatus of claim 1, wherein said second articulating joint comprises a rotational joint.

Claims 17-68. (Canceled) Please cancel claims 17-67 without prejudice to the possibility of filing one or more continuing applications directed to the subject matter recited therein.

69. (Original) An apparatus for stabilizing a localized portion of a beating heart, comprising:
a substantially rigid base member having at least one surface adapted to contact the surface of the heart, a post having a first end moveably coupled to said base member and a second end having a ball-shaped member extending therefrom.

70. (Original) The apparatus of claim 69, further comprising a delivery stem having a proximal end and a distal end, said distal end having a socket operably engaged with said ball-shaped member.

71. (Original) The apparatus of claim 69, wherein said delivery stem is substantially rigid.

Claims 72-76 (Canceled) Please cancel claims 72-76 without prejudice to the possibility of filing one or more continuing applications directed to the subject matter recited therein.

77. (Original) An apparatus for stabilizing a localized portion of a beating heart, comprising:
a base member having at least one surface adapted to contact the surface of the heart, a link member pivotably coupled to said base member at a predetermined pivot point, said link member having a first link end spaced a distance away from said pivot point; and
a post having a first post end attached to said first link end and a second post end having at least a ball shaped member extending therefrom.

Claims 78-83 (Canceled) Please cancel claims 78-83 without prejudice to the possibility of filing one or more continuing applications directed to the subject matter recited therein.